WILLIAMS'
TREATISE
ON THE
LORD'S SUPPER.

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A

TREATISE

ON THE

INSTITUTION, NATURE, AND DESIGN

OF THE

LORD'S SUPPER.

BY JAMES R. WILLIAMS,

A MINISTER OF THE METHODIST PROTESTANT CHURCH.

"This do in remembrance of me."—*Jesus.*
"For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come."—*Paul.*

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PREFACE.

THE Author of the following pages published an essay on the Lord's Supper, in the Methodist Protestant, at the request of the editor of that periodical, who had heard him deliver a discourse in St. John's church, on, "*This do in remembrance of me.*" Since the appearance of the essay, the writer has been repeatedly solicited to prepare a treatise, of convenient size, on the Lord's Supper, embodying the views presented in the essay. To gratify his friends, and to contribute his mite towards the elucidation of this important subject, he has revised the essay, and added a considerable amount of matter, which he hopes will be interesting and useful.

He has been induced the more cheerfully to undertake this little work, from the consideration, that, with the exception of one or two, he knows of no treatise on the subject which does not abound in phraseology and sentiment, calculated to lead the minds of the rising generation back again to the exploded doctrine of transubstantiation. The old language of transubstantiation is retained, and the unintelligible notion of spiritual manducation is inculcated in almost every treatise he has read. The highly exceptional phraseology of *old formularies*, blended with scriptural language, is defended, and urged on the acceptance of the religious community; and thus error and truth, light and darkness, are commingled, and presented to the minds of the humble, but sincere christian, to the great detriment of religious knowledge, and rational piety. "Take and eat this in

remembrance that Christ died for thee," is a scriptural injunction. But this is immediately and inseparably connected with an exhortation adapted to a species of transubstantiation which is utterly unintelligible. "And FEED on HIM in thy heart by faith." A late writer on the nature and design of the Lord's Supper, exclaims: "With what holy importunity should we concur in the petition; Grant us, therefore, gracious Lord, so to EAT the FLESH of thy dear Son, Jesus Christ, and to DRINK his BLOOD, that our sinful *bodies* may be made clean by his *body*, and our souls washed through his most precious blood." He is not alone, however, in this view of things; the same sentiments are reiterated, published, sung, and constantly impressed on the minds of entire worshipping assemblies. "Now, Lord, on us thy *flesh* bestow, and let us *drink* thy *blood*." "By faith his *flesh* we *eat*, who here his passion show." "*Drink* thy *blood* for sinners shed, *taste thee* in the broken bread." "Hail sacred feast which Jesus makes! *rich banquet* of his *flesh* and *blood*."

How revolting are such expressions to humanity and piety; and how completely *foreign* to the institution of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. They may, indeed, be pleasant to the ears of those who have been long accustomed to their sound, and serve to make religion mechanical; but they never can enlighten the mind, nor lead the heart to a just and profitable contemplation on the unbounded love and mercy of God in the gift of his Son for the redemption and salvation of a world of sinners lost. If we be not much mistaken, the day is approaching when the dark phraseology of superstition will give place to the intelligible language of the gospel; and the simple views of divine revelation will be received in preference to those mystical notions which de-

grade the christian religion, and bewilder the minds of the sincere followers of Christ.

The convention of the Methodist Protestant Church, at the formation of our economy, adopted an entire new service or formulary for the celebration of the Lord's Supper, in which there is not a single sentence concerning *feeding* on Christ's body by faith, or *drinking* his blood. Hence, we have no phraseology of this kind at the celebration of the Supper among us, except occasionally by some ministers, who, from old habit, *inadvertently* come over such expressions. When, however, these do occur, we should regard them as mere inadvertencies, and not suffer our minds to be diverted from a proper and correct exercise, suited to the occasion. The same deportment will be proper when we partake with christians of other denominations who constantly use a phraseology which we conceive to be exceptionable. It is our duty to exercise charity towards all, and to have fellowship, so far as we consistently can, with every denomination of professing christians, notwithstanding how they may differ from us in their modes of worship, or manner of expressing themselves in their formularies.

It has appeared to the writer, that a small work which shall clearly exhibit the nature and design of the Lord's Supper, freed from all the mystical shroudings of superstition, will be acceptable and useful to our community. Some persons, indeed, have supposed, that if the Eucharist be divested of those mystical notions, the service will lose much of its solemnity. To this objection we say; if the solemnity spoken of be produced by *erroneous* and *superstitious* notions, the sooner we are freed of such solemnity the better; for it must necessarily be evanescent in its nature, and unsanctifying in its effects. But this service needs no such auxiliaries. The contemplation

of the dying love of Jesus, accompanied by a lively faith in Christ, will be found sufficient to solemnize the soul, and move the heart of every rational christian. Who can contemplate the great love wherewith Christ loved us and gave himself for us, and not feel the emotions of a grateful and pious heart rising to God in thanksgiving and praise? Who can meditate on the character and sufferings of the Man of Sorrows, who was acquainted with grief, who was despised and rejected of men, buffeted, scourged, reviled, crucified, and not feel his soul moved within him, when he commemorates the death and passion of the Saviour? Who can reflect, without gratitude, on the fact, that Jesus "Christ, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man;" "that he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed." That through the sufferings, death, resurrection, and intercession of the Lord Jesus Christ, *whosoever* believeth in him shall be justified from all things from which he could not be justified by the law of Moses.

In the preparation of this little work, for the writer had no intention to make a book, two objects have been kept in view. One was to instruct the mind; and the other to affect the heart and improve the life of each individual who may peruse it, particularly the ministers and members of the Methodist Protestant Church. To these, therefore, it is dedicated, with the single request, that they peruse it with becoming attention, and accept the views offered, so far as they accord with the lively oracles of God.

Baltimore, *Dec.* 1, 1832.

TREATISE

ON THE

LORD'S SUPPER.

CHAPTER I.

A BRIEF NOTICE OF THE OPINIONS HELD BY LUTHER, ZUINGLE, CALVIN, AND OTHERS, ON THE LORD'S SUPPER.

THE early reformers are justly entitled to the gratitude and admiration of every real protestant in the universe, for the decision and zeal with which they assailed, and continued to expose the superstitions of their day. They are equally entitled to our veneration, on account of the sound principles they laid down for the government of themselves and their successors. The first and most important principle advanced by them, was: *The word of God is the only and sufficient rule of faith and practice.* The second, was: *Every christian has an inalienable right to private judgment in matters of religion.* These were necessarily connected, and the whole reformation proceeded upon them, so far as the policy and power of crowned heads and superstitious minds would permit. Such, however, was the state of the times

in which those early reformers lived, that a thorough reformation from the errors of popery, in doctrine, discipline, rites and ceremonies, was not to be expected during the lifetime of the principal actors in the great and glorious work of the reformation. They achieved much, but a great deal more remained to be accomplished. Indeed, at the present time, there still hangs about the doctrines and services of several protestant churches, some relics of popery. This remark is strikingly exemplified in the doctrines and services of the Eucharist, as exhibited in creeds, confessions of faith, formularies, catechisms, &c. of different protestant churches, in Europe and America.

Luther, the intrepid champion of the reformation in Germany, while he renounced the doctrine of transubstantiation as a pernicious error, taught the no less exceptionable doctrine of consubstantiation. He maintained, that although the bread and wine used in the Lord's Supper are not changed in substance into the body and blood of Christ, yet the *real* body and blood of Christ are in, with and under these elements, and are exhibited together with them, and received and eaten by every communicant. That christians really feed upon, and are spiritually nourished by the proper substance of Christ's body.

Dr. Maclaine, in a note explanatory of the term *impanation*, used by Dr. Mosheim in his Church History, holds the following language: "The term *impanation*, (which signifies here the *presence* of

Christ's body in the Eucharist, *in* or *with* the *bread* exhibited,) amounts to what is called *consubstantiation*. It was a modification of the monstrous doctrine of transubstantiation, and was first invented by some of the disciples of *Berenger*, who had not a mind to break all measures with the church of *Rome*, and afterwards adopted by LUTHER and his followers, who, in reality, made sad work of it. For, in order to give it some faint air of possibility, and to maintain it as well as they could, they fell into a wretched scholastic jargon about the nature of *substances*, *subsistences*, *attributes*, *properties* and *accidents*, that did infinite mischief to the true and sublime science of gospel theology, whose beautiful simplicity it was adapted to destroy. The very same perplexity and darkness, the same quibbling, sophistical and unintelligible logic that reigned in the attempts of the Roman Catholics to defend the doctrine of *transubstantiation*, were visible in the controversial writings of the Lutherans in behalf of *consubstantiation* or *impanation*. The latter had, indeed, one absurdity less to maintain; but being obliged to assert, in opposition to intuitive evidence and unchangeable truth, that the *same* body may be in *many* places at the same time, they were consequently obliged to have recourse to the darkest and most intricate jargon of the schools to hide the nonsense of this unaccountable doctrine."

We are happy to have it in our power, on good authority, to say, the modern Lutherans have gene-

rally abandoned the doctrine of consubstantiation as unintelligible and unscriptural. And we are also informed, that in almost all the newly organized congregations, bread is substituted for the wafer; and it is highly probable the altars will give place to tables.

The justly celebrated reformer, *Zuingle*, founder of the protestant or reformed churches in Switzerland, opposed Luther in a controversy on the doctrine of the Eucharist. He contended that the body and blood of Christ *are not present* in the Lord's Supper; that the bread and wine are no more than external *signs* or symbols of the *absent* body and blood of Christ, designed to excite in the minds of Christians a grateful *remembrance* of the sufferings and death of the Saviour. This opinion was embraced by all the friends of the reformation in Switzerland, and by a considerable number of reformers in Germany. Luther, on the other hand, maintained his doctrine of consubstantiation with the utmost obstinacy; and hence arose, in the year 1542, a tedious and vehement controversy, which eventuated in a fatal division of the reformed churches; and, to a very great extent, alienated in affection those who had embarked together in the sacred cause of religion and liberty.

John Calvin, the founder and head of the reformed church of Geneva, laboured with great assiduity and perseverance to reconcile the Lutheran and reformed churches; to effect which he presented another view of the Eucharist, differing a little

from Luther's opinion, but very much from that of Zuingle. He acknowledged the *real presence* of Christ's body and blood in the elements used at the Lord's Supper; but contended that they were *spiritually* present, and were eaten and drunk by faith.

The present creeds of the reformed churches appear to be identical with Calvin's notion. In the larger catechism of the Presbyterian and reformed churches, the following answer is given to the question—what is the Lord's Supper? "The Lord's Supper is a sacrament of the New Testament, wherein by giving and receiving bread and wine, according to the appointment of Jesus Christ, his death is showed forth; and they that worthily communicate *feed upon his body and blood* to their spiritual nourishment and growth in grace, &c." To the question—"*How* do they that worthily communicate in the Lord's Supper *feed upon the body and blood of Christ* therein? Ans. As the body and blood of Christ are not corporally or carnally present in, with or under the bread and wine in the Lord's Supper, are yet spiritually present to the faith of the receiver no less *truly* and *really* than the elements themselves, so they that worthily communicate in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, do therein *feed upon the body and blood of Christ*, not after a corporal or carnal, but in a spiritual manner; yet *truly* and *really* while by faith they receive and apply unto themselves Christ crucified, and the benefits of his death."

This view, however, is not to be received as the implicit faith of all the ministers and members of the reformed churches. Many of them consider this representation to be unintelligible and liable to serious objections, and view the Lord's Supper as exclusively commemorative.

Henry VIII. of England, the first protestant monarch of that country, having received complaints that a great diversity of doctrines were taught from the pulpits, sent a circular letter to all the bishops of the established church, (July 12, 1536,) forbidding all preaching till Michaelmas, by which time certain articles of religion should be set forth. The king himself framed the articles, and sent them into the convocation, where they were agreed to by both houses. The fourth article will exhibit the light in which the Lord's Supper was viewed, at that early period, by the divines of the Church of England:

"Art. 4. In the *sacrament of the altar*, under the form of bread and wine, there is *truly* and *substantially* the *same* body of Christ that was born of the Virgin."

The publication of the articles was followed by an order prohibiting the importation of foreign books, and forbidding all persons to dispute against the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist, on pain of death.

A subsequent parliament passed a statute, called "*The statute of the six articles*," entitled "*An act for abolishing diversity of opinions in certain ar-*

ticles concerning the christian religion." The first of these declares, that "in the sacrament of the altar, after the consecration, there remains no substance of bread and wine, but under these forms the natural body and blood of Christ are present." It was also enacted, "that if any did speak, preach or write against the *first article*, they should be judged heretics, and be burnt, without any abjuration, and forfeit their real and personal estate to the king." It will be perceived by these acts, that the Church of England, in the time of Henry VIII. held the monstrous doctrine of *transubstantiation*; and was equally intolerant with the Church of Rome.

Edward VI., son and successor of Henry VIII., appointed a committee composed of the dignitaries of the church, to examine and reform the offices of the church. They commenced with the Eucharist, in which they made little or no alteration, (in phraseology,) leaving the office of the mass as it stood, only adding an order that the priest should give to the communicants a portion of the wine as well as the wafer bread, and should dispense with the popish practice of elevating the elements.*

* The historian Neal states, that "in reforming the other offices, the committee examined and compared the Romish missals of *Sarum*, *York*, *Hereford*, *Bangor* and *Lincoln*, and out of them composed the morning and evening service, almost in the same form as it stands at present; only there was no confession nor absolution. From the same materials they compiled a litany, consisting of many short petitions, interrupted by suffrages, [responses;] it is the same with that which is now used, (in the Church of England,) except the petition to be delivered

The altars were subsequently removed from the cathedrals and churches, by order of the king's council, and tables were substituted. The reasons given, are: 1. "Because our Saviour instituted the sacrament at a *table*, and not at an altar." 2. "Because Christ is not to be sacrificed over again, but his body and blood to be spiritually eaten and drunk at the holy supper, for which a table is more proper than an altar." 3. "Because the Holy Ghost, speaking of the Lord's Supper, calls it the Lord's table, 1 Cor. x. 21—but no where an altar." 4. "The canons of the council of Nice, as well as the fathers *Chrysostom* and *Augustine*, call it the Lord's table; and though they sometimes call it an altar, it is to be understood figuratively." 5. "An altar has relation to a sacrifice; so that if we retain the one we must admit the other; which would give great countenance to mass-priests." 6. "There are many passages in ancient writers, which show that communion tables were of wood, that they were made like tables, and that those who fled into churches for sanctuary did hide themselves under them." 7. "The most learned foreign divines have declared against altars, as *Bucer*, *Calampadius*, *Zuingle*, *Bullinger*, *Calvin*, *P. Martyr*, &c. and have removed them out of their several churches; only the *Lutheran* churches retain them."—*Strype's Annals, vol.* 1, *p.* 162.

from the tyranny of the bishop of Rome, and all his detestable enormities; which, in the review of the liturgy in Queen Elizabeth's time was struck out."—*Neal's History.*

The historian Neal says: "*Ridley*, *Cranmer*, *Latimer*, and the rest of the *English* reformers, were unanimously of opinion, that retaining altars would serve only to nourish in the people's minds the superstitious opinion of a *propitiatory mass*, and would minister an occasion of offence and division among the godly."* The principal tenets and superstitious ceremonies of the Romish church were now nearly abolished, but the doctrine of the real presence was still retained.

In 1562, Elizabeth directed a review of the doctrines and discipline of the Church of England.—The convocation of divines began with the doctrines, and reduced the forty-two articles of Edward VI. to thirty-nine, which are substantially the same with the present thirty-nine articles of the Church of England, and the Protestant Episcopal church of these United States.

The twenty-eighth article treats of the Lord's Supper, and inculcates the notion advanced by Calvin, of *eating* and *drinking* the *body* and *blood* of Christ *spiritually* by *faith*. This article was adopted verbatim, in 1784, by the general conference of the Methodist Episcopal church, and is numbered eighteen in their book of discipline.

We will now, in the close of this chapter, record the doctrine of the Catholic church in her own words; and we shall do this, because some of

* Would it not be well if our brethren, as sensible reformers, were to abstain from calling the railing around the Lord's table, in our churches, "*the altar?*"

her ministers have charged us protestants with misrepresenting them and their doctrine of transubstantiation.

"The doctrine of the Roman Catholic church is, that in the mass, there is offered to God a true, proper, and propitiatory sacrifice for the living and the dead; and that the victim offered to God, is the body and blood, together with the soul and divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ. Every Catholic necessarily believes this doctrine in its fullest extent and plainest meaning, otherwise he would cease to be a member of the church."—*Preface to the Roman Missal.*

The Right Reverend Doctor England, Catholic Bishop of Charleston, in his explanation of the mass, says, "Christ made the bread his body by the words, '*This is my body.*' The change of the bread and wine into the body and blood takes place the moment these words of Christ are pronounced by the priest. Before the consecration it is *bread;* but when the words of Christ are added, it is no longer bread, but the *body of Christ.*— After the consecration, we have no longer bread and wine to contemplate, but the body and blood of Christ, under the appearance of bread and wine."

The French Catechism asserts that "The Eucharist is a sacrament which contains, really and substantially, the body, blood, soul, and divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ, under the forms and appearance of bread and wine." "The bread is

changed into the *body*, and the wine is *changed* into the *blood* of our Lord." And in answer to the question, "must we worship the body and blood of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist?" [the consecrated bread and wine.] The answer given is, "Yes, undoubtedly; for this body and this blood are inseparably united to his divinity."

In the canon of the mass we have the following direction. "After pronouncing the words of consecration, the priest, kneeling, ADORES and elevates the sacred host,"*—and then, "he ADORES and elevates the chalice,† and lays it on the altar." Elevating the bread and wine is designed to inform the people that the change has taken place, and that these are now objects of worship. Laying them on the altar, is the act of "offering them to God, as a true, proper, and propitiatory sacrifice for the living and the dead."

After making this offering and sacrifice, the priest proceeds to receive the sacrament, (as it is called by the Romish church.) On taking a part of the bread, he says: "the BODY of our Lord Jesus Christ preserve my soul to everlasting life." And on taking the wine, he says: "the BLOOD of our Lord Jesus Christ preserve my soul to everlasting life." After receiving, he prays: "may thy body, O Lord, which I have received, and thy blood, which I have drunk, cleave to my bowels; and grant that no stain of sin may remain in me, who have been fed with this pure and holy sacrament."

* The host is the consecrated bread.

† The chalice is the cup of wine.

The following "act of faith" is made by every Catholic, on receiving the wafer: "I most firmly believe that in this holy sacrament THOU art present, verily and indeed; that here is THY BODY and BLOOD, THY SOUL and THY DIVINITY."—*Prayer before Communion.*

The Catholic Directory instructs the people thus: "At the time of your receiving the host, let your head be erect, your mouth open moderately wide, and your tongue a little advanced, so as to rest upon your under lip, that the priest may conveniently convey the blessed sacrament into your mouth, which being done, shut your mouth, let the sacred host moisten a little upon your tongue, and then swallow it down as soon as you can, and afterwards abstain awhile from spitting. If the host should chance to stick to the roof of your mouth, be not disturbed, neither must you put your finger in your mouth to remove it, but gently and quietly remove it with your tongue, and so convey it down. And then, having received the priest's blessing, return to your place, and endeavor to entertain, as well as you can, the guest whom you have received."

Here we will take occasion to say, without the smallest degree of animosity or bigotry, that, in our opinion, there can be no doctrine advanced more unscriptural, irrational and pernicious in its consequences than that of transubstantiation, which is the doctrine of the Catholic Church. The scriptures no where inculcate this doctrine, nor authorise the

sacrifice of the mass, much less the gross idolatry of worshipping bread and wine. The doctrine of the Catholics represents Christ, when instituting his supper, as breaking his own body, and taking his own blood, and feeding his disciples with these, while his body remained entire, and his blood was still circulating in his veins; and also, as dividing and distributing among them his "soul and divinity," as food to be eaten. In the transubstantiation of the mass, they represent that the body of Christ is present, whole and entire, without division or separation of parts, in many thousand places at one and the same time. That the wafer, after "consecration," while it appears to all the senses, the sight, the touch, the smell, the taste, as being bread, yet that it is not bread, but "the flesh and blood, the soul and divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ."—That while the wafer evidently possesses all the properties of a material substance, such as, figure, divisibility, ponderosity, &c. yet it is not matter, but the infinite, undivided, incomprehensible God in Christ, who is "swallowed down" by each and every finite man and woman that receives the wafer. The native tendency of this absurd and shocking doctrine goes to destroy the testimony of our senses; to undermine the proofs of all the miracles by which God has confirmed revelation; to sanction and propagate idolatry; and to induce sensible men, in Catholic countries, and elsewhere, to reject christianity as a superstition too absurd to be believed.

CHAPTER II.

THE INSTITUTION, DESIGN AND NATURE OF THE LORD'S SUPPER.

THE history of the institution of the Lord's Supper is so plain a narrative, that it will be necessary only to transcribe the account given by the Evangelists and by Paul, to put every reader in possession of the facts in the case. Many profitable remarks and reflections on the occasion, might be made, but these would necessarily increase the number of pages, without adding essentially to the merit of the work. The harmonized view will facilitate our inquiries after the design and nature of the Supper, and furnish our readers with a ready means of collating all the passages.

"And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed *it*, and brake *it*, and gave *it* to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave *it* to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."—Matt. xxvi. 26–28.

"And as they did eat, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake *it*, and gave to them, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave *it* to them; and they all drank of it. And he said unto them,

This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many."—Mark, xiv. 22–24.

"And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake *it*, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you; this do in remembrance of me. Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup *is* the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you."—Luke xxii. 19, 20.

"For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus, the *same* night in which he was betrayed, took bread; And when he had given thanks, he brake *it*, and said, Take, eat; this is my body, which is broken for you; this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also *he took* the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink *it*, in remembrance of me."—1 Cor. xi. 23–25.

We have here, in a very few words, the only *authentic* history of the institution of the Lord's Supper. To this history *alone* we are to look for information on the design of this ordinance; for if the institutor has omitted any important matter relative to the design of his *own* institution, in vain shall we look for additional information from writers of a more modern date. But there is no omission here; the Lord has doubtless communicated by the Evangelists and the Apostle Paul, all that is necessary for his followers to know on this important subject. All that remains for us to do, is clearly to ascertain our Lord's meaning, and faithfully practice the duty.

Nothing can be plainer, than that our Lord, when he instituted his supper, designed it to be a COMMEMORATIVE FEAST, which should be observed by his followers in remembrance of him.—"THIS DO IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME." The disciples understood these words in their plain literal signification, as enjoining on them, and on all christians, the observance of this duty. Hence, after the resurrection and ascension of their Master, they commenced the duty of breaking bread, in imitation and *memory* of Christ, and taught the primitive christians to do the same, in simplicity and sincerity of heart; hence, in the Acts and the Epistles, it appears that the early christians made this a part of the services of every Lord's day.—Even at *Troas*, in *Asia*, where Paul tarried seven days, on his return from Greece to Syria, the believers were in the practice of celebrating the Lord's supper on the first day of the week. "*And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them.*" —Acts xx. 7. It also appears, that the evening of the Lord's day was selected as the most appropriate time for this service; for Paul "*continued his speech until midnight; And there were many lights in the upper chamber where they were gathered together.*"

But it has been asserted, that the disciples misunderstood their master's meaning when he gave them bread and wine, after having supped on the Paschal Lamb—that he did not design to institute

this as a religious rite in his church, *commemorative* of his death and passion—and that the disciples led the primitive christians into error—and christians of every age since have followed them in error. We dare not admit this assertion, because of its consequences, for if we admit that the disciples were mistaken in so plain a case, we have no guarantee that they were not also mistaken in other points of still greater importance. There is, however, one fact which settles this question, and that is, Paul received from the Lord, by revelation, a history of the institution and obligations of the Supper. Addressing himself to the Corinthians, who had been guilty of great improprieties in celebrating the Lord's Supper, Paul says: "For I have *received of the Lord* that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread," &c. And in the following verse he declares the design of the institution: "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come." Ye do commemorate his death and passion, and openly publish and tell the world that Jesus died to redeem sinners; that he is risen again, and ascended on high, and that he will come again to raise the dead, and judge the world in righteousness. Now, had there been any error or mistake on the part of the disciples, in relation to this feast, Christ would have corrected it in his revelation to Paul, but the revelation has confirmed the facts, and sustained the disciples. Therefore,

we conclude that the disciples were not mistaken; that Christ did design his supper to be a perpetual commemorative feast in his church—that the Apostles, the primitive christians, and all christians in every age of the church, up to the present day, have been under obligation to celebrate this feast in remembrance of Christ.

Dr. Benjamin Hoadly, in his "plain account of the nature and design of the Lord's Supper," has spoken so clearly and forcibly on this part of our subject, that we cannot forego the pleasure of transcribing a portion of his treatise. "It appears from these passages [those we have cited] that the *end* for which our Lord instituted this duty, was the *remembrance* of himself; that the *bread* to be taken and eaten, was appointed to be the *memorial* of his *body* broken, and the *wine* to be drunk, was ordained to be the *memorial* of his *blood* shed: or, (according to the express words of St. Paul,) that the one was to be eaten, and the other to be drunk, in REMEMBRANCE of Christ; and this to be continued until He, who was once *present* with his disciples, and is now *absent*, shall *come again*."

"The doing any *act* in *remembrance* of a person, implies his *bodily absence;* and if he is corporally *present*, we are never said, nor can we be said, to *perform* that action in order to *remember* him.—And, therefore, it being declared, in the places before mentioned, that the end of this *institution* was the *remembrance* of Christ; it must follow from hence, that to *eat* and *drink*, in the Lord's

Supper, must be to *eat* and *drink* in a sense consistent with the notion of this *remembrance;* and, therefore, to suppose or teach, that christians eat his real natural body, in remembrance of his real natural body, and drink his real blood in remembrance of his real blood, is to teach that they are to do something in order to *remember* him, which, at the same time, supposes him corporally present, and destroys the very notion of that *remembrance*, and so directly contradicts the most important words of the *institution* itself."

"The same may be said of the doctrine of a real sacrifice of Christ's body, offered by the priest, (in the mass,) viz: That it contradicts the very *words* of the *institution*, in which the *remembrance* of an *absent body* broken, not the *offering* of a *present body*, is declared to be the END of this religious action. I say the very *words:* for this is not left to be deduced by *consequences* drawn from scripture words, but *declared* in the *words* themselves."

"It ought to be remarked, also, that the phrase, FEEDING upon *Christ's body* and *blood*, and all like it, are *very figurative* expressions, and *not so peculiarly proper* to this rite, as those expressions which strictly preserve that ESSENTIAL notion of *remembrance*, without which this part of christian service ceases to be what it was designed to be by its great institutor. And, indeed, we so long *only* strictly keep up to the *original* design of the institution, whilst we consider it as a rite seriously performed in *remembrance* of an absent Saviour,

and take the bread and wine as *memorials* of his *body* broken and his *blood* shed, and not as the things themselves in *remembrance* of which they were ordained to be received."—*Hoadly on the Supper.*

A few remarks will be necessary on the *expressions* made use of by the inspired writers in the passages adduced, at the commencement of this chapter.

Matthew and Mark read: "*This is my body;*" Luke: "*This is my body which is given for you;*" and Paul: "*This is my body which is broken for you.*"

These sentences are obviously *figurative* and *elliptical.* Examples of this kind of sentences abound in the scriptures, which are readily understood. On one occasion Christ said, "I am the *vine*, ye are the *branches.*" Again, "I am the *door*," &c.; "I am the way, the truth and the life." These are figurative expressions, which no reader can possibly misunderstand. No one, we presume, was ever led to believe, from reading these passages, that Christ was a *vine*, or a *door*, &c. Neither do we suppose any one to have been so silly as to *pluck out his right eye*, or *to cut off his right hand*, because our Lord had expressed himself in that figurative manner when he cautioned his hearers against tampering with tempting occasions to sin. Figurative and elliptical expressions are of constant recurrence in every book we read, every discourse delivered, and in all our conversations; yet, we seldom mistake their meaning. But cer-

tain men have affected not to understand the import of our Lord's words in this passage, in a figurative sense, and insist that they are to be taken literally. That Christ meant the bread was actually his body, and the wine his blood.

"This is my body, which is broken for you." Now this sentence is elliptical in both its parts. If it be not elliptical, the first part would convey an absurdity, and the second part would assert what was not true. The first part would say, the bread which Christ held in his hands was his body, which would be an absurdity; and the second part would assert that his body was then broken, which was not true; for his body was not broken till the scourgers had made long furrows in his back, and the nails had pierced his hands and his feet, and the soldier's spear had pierced his side and his heart. When the ellipsises are supplied, the sentence will be freed from all absurdity, and convey a rational meaning. "This *bread represents* my body, which is *to be* broken for you."

Numerous examples of this kind of sentence are found in the scriptures. And they grow out of the necessity of the case; for there is no term in the Hebrew, Chaldee or Syriac, which expresses to *signify*, *represent*, *mean*, *denote*. Our Lord spoke in the Caldeo-Syriac, and not in Latin or Greek; and, therefore, had no word in this language by which directly to convey the sentiment as we *must necessarily* understand it, and as it *was*

doubtless understood by his disciples. He, therefore, said: "This *is* my body," for, this *represents* my body. He used the same mode of expression in his parable of the tares. "The field IS *(represents)* the word; the good seed ARE *(represent or signify)* the children of the kingdom; the tares ARE *(signify)* the children of the wicked one, &c.—Matt. 13. 38, 39. The Hebrew language is remarkable for this kind of expression. The seven good kine *are (represent)* seven years; and the seven good ears *are (signify)* seven years: the dream is one. And the seven ill-favoured kine that came up after them *are (denote)* seven years." —Gen. xli. 26. Again, "The three branches *are (represent)* three days." "The three baskets *are (represent)* three days."—Gen. xl. 12. 18. The *Chaldee* language also furnishes examples: "The ten hours *are (represent)* ten kings."—Dan. vii. 24. Paul, who furnishes the most particular history of the supper, uses this kind of expression himself: "And that rock *was* Christ."—1 Cor. x. 4. His meaning evidently is, and that rock was *a type or representation* of Christ. Were we obliged to adhere to the letter of this text, without admitting the *obvious* meaning, we should be compelled to believe, that Christ was actually transformed into a massy rock in the wilderness, and, in this form, followed the Israelites through all their journeyings. "For they all drank of that spiritual rock that followed them; and that rock was Christ." Christ said: "this *cup is* the new testament in my

blood." Here, again, were we compelled to adhere strictly to the letter, we should understand our Lord as saying, the cup he then held in his hand was actually the new testament or covenant. Our Lord's meaning unquestionably was, "This cup *of wine* is the memorial of the new covenant which will be confirmed to you by the shedding of my blood.

In relation to the cup, Matthew reads: "And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave *it* to them, saying, drink ye all of it; for *this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.*" Mark: "This *is my blood of the new testament*, which is shed for many."—Luke: "This *is my blood of the new testament*, which is shed for you." And Paul: "This cup *is the new testament in my blood;* this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me." There is a slight, unimportant variation in the expressions used by those four writers, which only proves that they were not superstitiously scrupulous in numbering our Lord's words. Their great object was to represent exactly the design and import of his instructions. And this is fully represented by them, and perhaps, by neither of them better than by Matthew. "Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the new testament,* which is shed for

* The word διαθηκη (*diatheke,*) here translated *testament,* answers to the Hebrew word *Berith*, which all the translators of the Jewish Scriptures have understood to signify a *covenant.* The translators of the New Testament Scriptures have affixed the same signification to the word *diatheke* as often as it occurs

many for the remission of sins." The same figurative and elliptical mode of expression is here employed as was used in relation to the bread; and the same remarks and observations will apply here with equal propriety. "This is my blood, of the new testament, which *is shed for the remission of sins.*" This *wine* is an *emblem* or *memorial* of my blood, which is *to be* shed in testimony of the truth, and for the remission of sins. Drink ye all of this wine; and as often as ye shall *hereafter* drink wine thus, let it be a *memorial* to you of my sacrificial death; and that ye were not redeemed with the blood of animals, neither was the truth of the new covenant confirmed* by their blood, as that made with Abraham, but with the blood of the Son of God, in whom you have redemption by faith, even the forgiveness of your sins, and the salvation of your souls.

in the writings of the Evangelists and in the Epistles, except in the history of the Supper, and in 2 Cor. iii. 6. and Heb. vii. 22. ix. 16. In these passages they have improperly followed the Vulgate, which has *testamentum*.

* "The blood of Christ, or, in other words, his death, is called the *seal of the covenant* in this figurative sense alone, viz: That as covenants amongst men are signed by some peculiar *mark* or *seal*, in order to shew and prove their *truth* and validity; so Christ's death, or Christ's blood, considered as the proof he voluntarily gave that the terms brought by him to mankind, from God, were truly what he had represented them to be, is, by a *figure* of speech, called the *seal* of the *new covenant;* and he may be said to have *sealed* it with his blood, as his *death* was the strongest proof he could give of the *reality* of his own and of his Father's affection towards mankind."—*Hoadly*.

It evidently was not our Lord's design, in the passages under consideration, to teach his disciples to eat his body as the Jews ate the Paschal Lamb; but, that he was then instituting a feast of bread and wine in memory of his sacrificial death on the cross. Hence, he *broke* the bread before he gave it to them to shadow forth his violent death for their redemption. Take, eat; this *broken* bread represents my body, which on the morrow is to be *broken* for you. Let this great event be constantly before your minds, for there is no other sacrifice for sin; and let your faith lay firm hold on the promise of the Father, that whosoever believeth in me *shall not* perish, but have everlasting life.

Neither did he design to teach his disciples to drink his blood, when he gave them the cup; but to shew them that his blood, which had been from the beginning typified by the shedding of the blood of animals, was now about to be poured out for the redemption of the world; and, that they should commemorate that most solemn event by a perpetual feast in memory of his dying love to man. The idea of eating the flesh and drinking the blood of their beloved master could not have entered into the minds of the disciples. It was too shocking to be received by them as *Jews*, who would not so much as eat or drink the blood of animals: and it is too monstrous to be received by us Gentiles, who make some pretensions to common sense. Those very men wrote to the Gentile converts at Antioch, and elsewhere, to abstain from

things strangled and from *blood.* Can it then be believed, that they who abhorred the *blood of animals* would daily drink the *blood of Jesus Christ?* Even Catholic writers have felt the horror of this cannibal notion, and ingenuously confess, "that did their senses perceive what their faith obliges them to believe, the horror of it would be so great, that almost all persons would abhor the receiving this sacrament." And hence they give those two *jesuitical* reasons why, though they do substantially eat the flesh, and drink that very blood which our Lord shed upon the cross, yet "they do this under the covert of the accidents of bread and wine. 1. That human piety might not abhor the sacrament as they then would do; for, say they, should they see the color of human flesh, and the color of human blood, and taste the savour of them, the horror of it would hinder the receiving of the sacrament. 2. That this was a just reason why our Lord's body and blood should lie thus concealed under the species of bread and wine, lest it should be known to infidels, and be open to their blasphemies; lest the action should be ridiculous to them, scandalous, inhuman, and execrable."—[See Whitby's Annotation on Matthew, xxvi. 26.]

According to our view of the subject, (and we sincerely believe we have given that which Christ intended,) the Lord's Supper is a *commemorative* feast of bread and wine, which elements serve as *memorials* of the broken body and shed blood of Christ.

It would seem by the institution of this feast, that Christ intended to fix the eyes of his followers constantly on the great gospel doctrine, "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life; for God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world, through him, might be saved."— That his death and resurrection was the only foundation of their hope of salvation from sin, of a glorious resurrection from the dead, and of eternal life. That the frequent recurrence of this feast should strongly remind christians of the great love wherewith Christ loved them, and gave himself for them, to redeem them from all iniquity, and their corresponding obligation to believe in him, to love him and keep his commandments. That as the passover was instituted to remind the Israelites of their deliverance from Egyptian bondage, so the Lord's Supper was instituted to remind christians of the means of their deliverance from the bondage of sin; and to encourage them to look forward for a full participation in the benefits of this redemption.

The commemoration of the sacrificial death of Christ, brings into view the most important considerations to which the mind of a christian can be directed. The various subjects for contemplation connected with, and involved in the atonement made by the Lord Jesus Christ, are of such a heavenly and saving character, as to make it im-

possible for a pious man or woman to reflect upon them, without having the mind enlightened, the heart affected, and the life improved. In every instance, when we commemorate the death and passion of our dear Redeemer, it is our duty and privilege to dwell with prayerful attention on the numerous events, benefits, and corresponding obligations growing out of the unbounded mercy and goodness of God, in the ample provision he has made for the present and eternal salvation of a world of sinners lost; and to have our minds illuminated by the heavenly truths developed in the gospel, and our souls refreshed in waiting on God in this most precious means of grace. The sacrificial death of Christ has been the great absorbing subject of contemplation to the universe. Men and angels dwell upon it with admiration and astonishment; and it will be the theme of grateful adoration and praise through the ample rounds of eternity. Heaven's high arches will forever resound with the doxologies of the redeemed out of all nations and kindreds and peoples and tongues; "Unto Him that hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father, to him be glory and dominion, forever and ever."

The ancient worthies contemplated the redemption of the Messiah with becoming interest and corresponding hope. Adam viewed, through the vista of ages, as his own descendant and Saviour, the Son of the woman who should bruise the ser-

pent's head. Abraham saw Christ's day in the promise, that in his seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed; and in the offering up of Isaac, was presented to his mind, in a figure, the vicarious sacrifice of Christ, his resurrection from the dead, and the increase of his kingdom. Moses beheld in the uplifted brazen serpent, the type of the crucified Saviour; and contemplated him in the prophet the Lord God would raise up for the people, to whom the ends of the earth might look and be saved. Every priest that served at the altar, or entered the "most holy place," exhibited in the shed and sprinkled blood of sacrificed animals, the expressive types of that atoning blood poured out on Calvary for the redemption of the world. And the prophets, with intense interest, looked forward to the advent of the Messiah who would bring in everlasting righteousness, and be to all nations the salvation of God;—of which salvation they inquired, searching diligently what the spirit of Christ, which was in them, did signify, when it testified beforehand of His sufferings and of the glory that should follow. Some of these received such clear views of the advent, character, sufferings, death, resurrection, and future glory of the Messiah, that they spake as though they had lived after the incarnation of the Son of God. "Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given; the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace." But, "He

is despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief." "He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth." "The assembly of the wicked have enclosed me, they pierced my hands and my feet—I may tell all my bones; they look and stare upon me—they parted my garments among them, and cast lots for my vesture." "But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed." "When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hands." To the last, but not the least of the prophets, it was reserved to exclaim: "Behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world."

The birth of the Saviour excited the admiration of the heavenly host who announced the glad tidings to the shepherds of Bethlehem, and ushered in the advent of the Messiah with the heavenly anthem: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will towards men." The wise men of the east fell prostrate before him, and presented gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.—And the venerable Simeon, who waited for the consolation of Israel, to whom it was revealed that he should not see death before he should behold the Lord's Christ, took the infant Saviour up in his arms, blessed God, and said: "Lord, now lettest

thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word; for mine eyes have seen thy salvation."—At the period of his baptism, the heavens were opened, and the spirit of God descended upon him, and lo, a voice from heaven cried: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Heaven and earth appeared to rejoice at the introduction of the anointed one who should preach the gospel to the poor, heal the broken hearted, preach deliverance to the captives, and the acceptable year of the Lord, in whom the prophecies should meet their accomplishment: "He will come and save you; *then* the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; *then* shall the lame man leap as a hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing—the wilderness and the solitary places shall be glad, and the desert shall blossom as the rose—and the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." But in the awful hour when Christ on the cross cried, "It is finished," and dismissed his spirit, the heavens appeared to weep, the sun was darkened, the earth trembled, the rocks rent; and nature, clad in darkness, appeared to shudder at the sight of Jesus hanging lifeless on the cross. Truly, that was a period of mourning and dismay. The heart-broken mother weeps at the foot of the cross, and the terrified disciples are overwhelmed with apprehension and grief; even his enemies, amid

the terror of the scene, are heard to exclaim: "Surely this was the Son of God."

But it was impossible for death to hold the Saviour. On the morning of the third day the bands of death are loosed; the sealed sepulchre is broken; for the angel of the Lord, whose countenance was like lightning and his raiment white as snow, descended from heaven, and rolled back the stone from the door, and said to the weeping women who came to mourn around the tomb, "He is RISEN, as he said. Come see the place where the Lord lay; and go quickly and tell his disciples, that he is *risen from the dead*, and behold he goeth before you into Galilee." But the triumphs of the resurrection had not ceased here. After remaining with his disciples forty days, and giving them many infallible proofs of his resurrection, "Jesus led them forth as far as Bethany, and he lifted up his hands and blessed them—and while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven—and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly towards heaven as he went up, behold two men stood by them in white apparel, who said: Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus who is taken up into heaven, will so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." And hence, said John: "Behold he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him, and they also who pierced him; and all the kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him."—

But unto the righteous shall he say: "Come ye blessed of my Father and inherit eternal life."

Since the crucifixion, resurrection and ascension of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, all eyes have been turned back upon those interesting events, and forward to the accomplishment of the declarations and promises of Almighty God. The constant theme of all the Apostles, in every sermon, was: *Christ crucified—Christ risen again from the dead—Christ* the *wisdom* of God, and the *power* of God to every one that *believeth*—and Christ the *judge* of quick and dead; "the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end; which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty." For the truth as it is in Jesus, the martyrs burnt and bled. Every evangelical minister of the gospel to the present hour has cried: behold! behold the Lamb! And all who have believed in the name, and fallen asleep in Jesus, rest in hope of a glorious resurrection, and a blessed enjoyment of God in heaven, through the atonement and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.

In the sacrificial death of Christ, we who now live and believe in him, see, in the most striking manner, the enormity and heinous character of sin; nothing short of the shed blood of Christ was sufficient to remove its guilt. In this sacrifice we have an exhibition of the great love of God to the human family: "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, might not perish, but have ever

lasting life." In his voluntary acts and sufferings, we have ample evidence of the great love wherewith Christ loved us, and gave himself for us.—"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." Do we admire a Washington? We do. He *risked* his life for his country and his *friends;* but Jesus Christ *died* for the world and for his *enemies;* "for, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." In this offering we have a proof of the universality of the redemption: "For Christ, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man—and became a propitiation for the sins of the whole world." And in the resurrection of Christ from the dead, we have a well founded hope of immortality for the body, and eternal life for the soul. Hence we may, when contemplating this great subject, exclaim with the Apostle: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again to a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in the heavens for those who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time."

When we celebrate the Lord's Supper, the contemplation of the unbounded love of God to the world, and the great love of Christ to the souls of men; his laborious life, his unspeakable sufferings, his painful death, his glorious resurrection, his

continual intercession, should penetrate every heart, wind up our affections to heaven, and prompt each one to dedicate his soul and body anew to the service of the living and true God. We should remember, that this feast was of Christ's own appointment, that it was instituted on the eve of his passion, and that, therefore, the command, "Do this in remembrance of me," must be viewed as his dying injunction to all his believing followers.—Coldness and indifference, therefore, on those occasions would be criminal, and sure marks of an unbelieving and ungrateful heart. The act of commemoration calls on us for the exercise of all the finer feelings of the human soul; and invites to the discharge of all the duties of a grateful mind and pious life. On those occasions, as in the use of every other means of grace, we have the assurance that grace will be communicated by the immediate influences of God's Spirit. Although the Lord's body is not present, yet Christ is present in spirit, and waits to be gracious to every believing, seeking, praying soul. He sees who of his professed followers surround his table, and who turn their backs upon his ordinance. He sees the grateful emotions of the hearts of those who commemorate the dying love of Jesus, and have fellowship with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ; and he sees the indifference and apathy of the mere formalist whose heart enters not fully into the contemplation of these things.—He hears the prayer of faith, put up by the believer

and the penitent, and breaks the bread of life to every humble, prayerful soul. True solemnity, fervent prayer, vigorous faith, sincere gratitude, genuine benevolence, and unreserved dedication of soul and body, should characterize the devotions of every christian in his approaches to the Lord's table. Thus shall we worthily and profitably keep this feast, and bear our testimony to the truth as it is in Jesus.

When I view my Saviour bleeding,
For my sins, upon the tree;
Oh how wondrous!—how exceeding
Great his love appears to me!

Floods of deep distress and anguish,
To impede his labors came;
Yet they all could not extinguish
Love's eternal, burning flame.

Sure such infinite affection
Lays the highest claim to mine;
All my pow'rs, without exception,
Should in fervent praises join.

Jesus, fit me for thy service;
Form me for thyself alone;
I am thy most costly purchase,
Take possession of thy own.

CHAPTER III.

A CANDID EXAMINATION OF THOSE PASSAGES OF SCRIPTURE WHICH OCCASIONALLY RELATE TO THE LORD'S SUPPER.

THE first passage we shall bring into view is 1 Cor. chap. x. verses 14–21.

"Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry. I speak as to wise men; judge ye what I say. The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we *being* many are one bread, *and* one body; for we are all partakers of that one bread. Behold Israel after the flesh; are not they which eat of the sacrifices partakers of the altar? What say I then? that the idol is any thing? or that which is offered in sacrifice to idols is any thing? But *I say*, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God; and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils. Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils; ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils."

The advocates of the spiritual and mysterious manducation of the body and blood of Christ, select the sixteenth verse of this passage to sustain their opinion, and so explain it, as to make the word

communion signify, to *partake* in the sense of *eating* and *drinking*. "To such as rightly, worthily, and with *faith* receive the same, the bread which we break is a *partaking* of the *body of Christ;* and likewise the cup of blessing, is a *partaking* of the *blood of Christ*." And hence they pray: "Grant us, therefore, gracious Lord, so to *eat* the *flesh* of thy dear son Jesus Christ, and to *drink* his *blood*, that our sinful bodies may be made clean by his body, and our souls washed through his most precious blood."

There are several good reasons why the term *communion* in the sixteenth verse, should not be explained to express eating and drinking the body and blood of Christ, in any manner whatever.

1. Because such an interpretation would turn the verse into nonsense.

The *cup* of blessing which we bless, is it not the *drinking* of the blood of Christ? The *bread* which we break, is it not the *eating* of the body of Christ? Every reader will see, at once, the impropriety of this language; for how can the *cup* be the *act* of drinking, and how can the *bread* be the *act* of eating? To say with Paul: "For as often as ye *eat this bread and drink this cup*, ye do show the Lord's death till he come," is good figurative language, because the *cup*, by a well known figure of speech, is put for the *wine* contained in it. But to say the *cup* is the *drinking* of the blood of Christ, and the *bread* is the *eating* of the body of Christ, is neither figurative nor plain sense.

2. Because no writer in the New Testament has used the word *koinonia*, which is here rendered communion, in the sense of partaking of food or nourishment of any kind or in any manner whatever. But the advocates of this notion say, "They that worthily *communicate*, FEED on his body and blood, to their spiritual *nourishment*."

3. Because it would invalidate the Apostle's argument.

For how does it follow, because the Corinthian christians ate the body and drank the blood of Christ, that, therefore, they who ate with the idolaters, of things sacrificed to idols, were guilty of idolatry?*

4. Because it would convict the Apostle of an absurd assertion, both as it regarded the Jews, and those who ate of idol sacrifices.

Paul says, in the eighteenth verse, "Behold Israel after the flesh, are not they which eat of the sacrifices partakers of the altar?" Now if this word is to be rendered *eating*, as the advocates of manducation explain the term *communion* in the sixteenth verse, we make the Apostle say; those who partook of the Jewish sacrifices, ate also a part of the altar. We make him say the same thing of those

* The inconclusiveness of Dr. Cudworth's argument, employed by himself and others, to demonstrate, that the Lord's Supper, is a feast upon a sacrifice, has been fully exposed and refuted by Mr. Bell. An abstract of his reasoning may be seen in "The Communicant's Guide," published by Rev. J. P. K. Henshaw, D. D. Page 33.

who ate of the idol sacrifices, or rather worse, namely, that they ate the substance of devils.

5. Because it would involve the Apostle in all the gross absurdities of transubstantiation. For if we make the term *koinonia, communion*, signify to eat the flesh and drink the blood of Christ, we necessarily make Paul teach the monstrous doctrine of transubstantiation. If the Apostle had designed to inculcate this doctrine, he would have omitted the word "communion" altogether, and put the questions thus; The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the body of Christ? Do we not *all*, by partaking of *these*, actually eat the body and drink the blood of Christ?

6. Because to assert that the term communion in the sixteenth verse, expresses that those who worthily eat of the Lord's Supper, actually partake of Christ's body and blood, *spiritually*, by faith, would be to involve Paul in another absurdity; and make him teach the unscriptural and unphilosophical doctrine, that the glorified *human body* of Christ "which is reserved in the heavens until the restitution of all things that God hath spoken by the mouth of his prophets," has now become an *omnipresent spirit*, and may be eaten in the supper with the bread, by each and every *finite* communicant who has a sufficiently capacious faith.

7. To interpret the term, here in question, by the following construction, "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the *partaking of the* BEN-

EFITS *procured* by the shed blood of Christ?" &c. would be to present a view utterly foreign to the Apostle's argument. His obvious design was to convince the Corinthian christians, that to eat with idolaters, of things sacrificed to idols, would necessarily involve them in the crime of idolatry. This being his design, it was not to his purpose to say; "By eating bread and drinking wine in the Lord's Supper, you partake of the BENEFITS of Christ's death; and, therefore, you cannot eat of the heathen sacrifices." No such conclusion could follow from the premises, consequently his reasoning would be inconclusive.

The term *koinonia*,* here rendered *communion*, signifies, in almost every passage where the word occurs, *fellowship*; and uniformly expresses the idea of some social relation, or, something common to a community of persons. "And they continued steadfastly in the Apostle's doctrine and *fellowship*, (*koinonia*,) and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." Acts ii. 42. "God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the *fellowship*, (*koinonia*,) of his son, Jesus Christ our Lord."—1 Cor. i. 9. "And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of *fellowship*," (*koinonia.*)—Gal. ii. 9.

"That ye also may have fellowship, (*koinonia*,)

* The term *koinonia* is derived from *koinonos*, a partner, a companion, one who takes part with another in business, labor, sufferings, &c.

with *us*, and truly our *fellowship*, (*koinonia*,) is with the Father, and with his Son, Jesus Christ." "If we say we have *fellowship*, (*koinonia*,) with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have *fellowship*, (*koinonia*,) one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin."—1 John, i. 3, 6, 7.

"What communion, (*koinonia*, *fellowship*,) hath light with darkness, and what concord hath Christ with Belial? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols?"—2 Cor. vi. 14, 15.

"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion, (*koinonia*, *fellowship*, abiding presence,) of the Holy Ghost, be with you all."—2 Cor. xiii. 14

Now if the term *koinonia* were rendered in each of these passages by the word *partake*, how strange would be the reading. The reader can make the experiment for himself, by substituting the word *partake* for *fellowship*.

There are three passages in the New Testament, where the word *koinonia* is used to express the distribution of alms, or rather the *fellowship collections*, presented by a society or church, for the relief of the poor saints; but the word is no where employed to express the partaking of food or nourishment in any way, or of any kind. There are only two passages in addition to the one under consideration, wherein the term *koinonia* is rendered *communion*. They are cited above, viz: 2 Cor.

vi. 14, and 2 Cor. xiii. 14. By a single glance at the passages, every reader will perceive that these, also, should have been rendered *fellowship*, instead of *communion;* for, notwithstanding our translators have used the two words as *synonymous*, yet there was no necessity to change the term they had constantly employed in translating the other passages.

For the same reason, the word *koinonia*, in the passage under consideration, should also have been rendered *fellowship*, and the term *emblem*, *symbol*, *sign* or *memorial* supplied to make out the sense. "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the fellowship *symbol* of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the fellowship *symbol* of the body of Christ? *I say the fellowship symbol:* For we being many are one bread, *that is* one body; and we all partake, (*metechomen,*) of one and the same bread. *By these things, and this social act, our fellowship is known and acknowledged to be a christian community. We jointly declare to the world that our faith and hope is in* CHRIST CRUCIFIED."

An attentive perusal of the whole passage will clearly exhibit the Apostle's sense, and justify our rendering. "My dearly beloved, FLEE FROM IDOLATRY." That debasing and corrupting religion of the heathen. Mingle not with her votaries. Be not allured by her showy rites and pompous ceremonies. Partake not of her sacrifices. "For the things the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God; and I would not that

ye should have fellowship with devils." *"I speak as to wise men."* To men who are not ignorant of the facts, that each religious fellowship is recognised by the character of its religious feasts or festivals; and that those who partake, identify themselves with that particular community with whom they eat.

The cup of blessing which we bless, *(and of which we drink,)* is it not our fellowship memorial of the blood of Christ? The bread which we *break, (and eat,)* is it not our fellowship memorial of the body of Christ? For though we be many, we are, nevertheless, one body, *(or society of believers;)* and we all partake *(metechomen)* of the same bread. Now, by keeping this feast, and all eating and drinking of those things, do we not jointly declare ourselves *christians,* and that our faith and hope rests on *Christ crucified?* "Behold Israel after the flesh, *(the Jews;)* are not they which eat of the sacrifices partakers of the altar? Do they not, by eating of the sacrifices offered on God's altar, *identify* themselves with those who serve at the altar, and thus acknowledge themselves to be Jews, and, consequently, the worshippers of God? And do not they who eat with them, by that act, make the same acknowledgment? By parity of reason, those who eat with idolaters, of things sacrificed to demons, are, by that act, constituted idolaters. Now if any of you, who profess to be christians, accept an invitation and eat at a heathen feast, of things sacrificed to idols, does

not that act *necessarily* constitute you, professedly, idolaters, and idolaters of the worst kind? "for the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons, and not to God." "And I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils," and idolaters. Nay, brethren, "ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils; ye cannot be partakers *(metechien)* of the Lord's table, and the table of devils," without becoming professed idolaters, renouncing your christian fellowship, and abjuring your faith in *Christ crucified.**

We have only a thought or two more to add in our explanation of this passage. The phrase, "The cup of blessing which we bless," has been pressed into the service of those who think it necessary to "*consecrate the elements.*" Dr. Macknight quotes the original, and gives, on the best authority, the following literal translation: "The cup for which we give thanks and praise." Matthew, Mark and Paul, in their account of the institution of the Lord's Supper, express this part of the action by the word *eucharistesas, having given thanks;* and hence the service itself has long borne the apella-

* We have no objection to the word *communion,* in the sixteenth verse of this passage, provided the sense of the original term be not perverted; and Paul made to teach, contrary to his obvious design, a doctrine at variance with scripture and common sense. Nor do we object to the phrase, "the communion," "the communion table," provided these apellations are distinctly understood to express, simply, the Lord's Supper, the Lord's table. We think, however, it would be more appropriate always to call them by the latter names.

tion of the Eucharist, by way of eminence.—Neither of the Apostles, in his account of the institution, has even intimated, that Christ blessed either the cup or the bread, or directed his followers to do so; but each of them, who has given a particular relation of this part of the history, has expressed it by, he "*gave thanks.*"

The second passage we shall cite as relating to the Lord's Supper reads:

"For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not *discerning* the Lord's body."—1 Cor. xi. 29.

It is said, Paul here teaches, that the body of Christ is present in the Supper, and those who eat and drink without discerning his body, eat and drink unworthily, and bring upon themselves damnation. This most extraordinary view of the passage is truly alarming, and, if correct, would alone be sufficient to deter half the christians in the universe from approaching the Lord's table. There is no question but that it has prevented thousands.

To rescue the passage from so wild a construction, and to exhibit it in its true import, it will be necessary to view it in connexion with the preceding matter. The christians, at Corinth, had been guilty of great improprieties in the celebration of the Lord's Supper. "When ye come together, therefore, in one place, this is not to eat the Lord's Supper. For in eating, every one taketh before *other*, his own Supper; and one is hungry, and another is drunken."—Verses 20, 21.

The import appears to be this; When you assemble in your place of worship to celebrate the Lord's Supper, you are so intent on having a feast, that you lose sight of the nature and design of the institution, spend your time, like the idolaters, in eating and drinking; and some of you who are hungry or gluttonous, eat to excess; and others, who are fond of wine, drink to excess; and thus sin against God, and pervert the institution of Christ, making that solemn service a part of a common feast. "What, have ye not houses to eat and drink in (with your friends) or despise ye the church of God," &c. In reference to this great perversion of the Lord's Supper, and to the unworthy and intemperate use of the elements, the Apostle declares, that he who eateth and drinketh in this unworthy manner, "eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, *not discerning the Lord's body;*" that is, does not distinguish the symbols of the body and blood of Christ, from common bread and wine, as used in an ordinary feast, and uses them profanely and intemperately. Hence says the Apostle in the following verse: "For this cause, many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep." Many among you are diseased and languishing, and many are dead in consequence of God's displeasure.

The Greek word here rendered "*discerning*," is *diakrinon*, from *dia*, denoting *separation*, and *krino*, to *judge*, importing to *distinguish*, *discriminate*, or to make a *difference*. Hence Acts xv. 8, 9,

"And God, who knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us. And put no *difference* (diekrine) between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith." And in Jude, 22d verse: "And of some have compassion, making a *difference.*"

In the English Bible, printed in 1568, this clause, B. Pearce informs us, is translated, "*he maketh no difference of the Lord's body.*" Dr. Macknight paraphrases the verse thus: "For he who eateth and drinketh the Lord's Supper improperly subjects himself to punishment, because he does not *discriminate* the symbols of the body of the Lord from the common bread and wine designed for the nourishment of life." Dr. Whitby's note on the word *unworthily* deserves attention. "It signifies their (the Corinthian christians) behaving themselves as if they had not considered that this sacrament was instituted in thankful and practical remembrance of Christ dying for them, and ratifying by his blood the covenant in which he promised, *to be merciful to their iniquities, and remember their sins no more;* and as a *feast of love* designed equally for the benefit of all his members, and to knit them in the closest bonds of unity and friendship to each other. When this was wanting, they did not discern aright the Lord's body, or the sacrament (symbols) of it, and so did eat and drink *unworthily.*"

To eat and drink the bread and wine in the Lord's Supper *unworthily*, is to eat and drink as

the Corinthians did. To eat the Supper without reference to Christ's sacrificial death, and to eat and drink of the symbols intemperately. Therefore, no christian of our day may have any fear of eating and drinking at the Lord's table *unworthily*, while he carefully distinguishes between this and an ordinary feast, endeavors to honor Christ in the service, and uses the elements temperately.

There is a passage in John's gospel, which, at first sight, appears very pointedly to favor the notion of eating the body and drinking the blood of Christ, but, in reality, has no relation whatever to the subject.

"Then said Jesus unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him."—John, vi. 53–56.

This passage has no relation whatever to the Lord's Supper; it was spoken one year before the institution of the Supper; and it will be obvious to every one who reads the chapter, that eating the flesh and drinking the blood of Christ in the passage mean nothing more than *believing* in him with a saving faith. In the 40th verse Jesus said: "This is the will of him that sent me, that every one who seeth the Son, and BELIEVETH on him,

may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day." Again in the 47th verse: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that BELIEVETH in me hath everlasting life." In the 54th verse he says: "Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day." Evidently meaning as above, "he that *believeth* in me." The Jews very properly said, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" And "many of his disciples, when they had heard this, said: this is a hard saying; who can hear it?"—"When Jesus knew in himself that his disciples murmured at it, he said unto them, Doth this offend you? What, and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before? *It is the spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing:* the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." They are figurative, and to be understood in a metaphorical sense. It is evident, from the following verses, that the twelve, after this explanation, understood him distinctly to mean, by eating and drinking, no more than *believing* on him. For, when many of his followers abandoned him on account of these "hard sayings," Jesus said to the twelve: "Will ye also go away? Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life, *And we* BELIEVE *and are sure that thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.*"

The seventh and eighth verses of the fifth chapter of 1st Corinthians, is brought to bear upon the Lord's

Supper for two purposes: first, to prove that christians should use unleavened bread at the Lord's table; and secondly, that as Christ is said to be "our passover sacrificed for us," therefore, he is to be *eaten* as the Jews ate the Paschal Lamb.

In view of the first opinion, that christians should use unleavened bread at the Lord's table, we will remark, there is nothing in the passage to favour the notion. The word leaven is obviously used *figuratively*, in allusion to the contaminating example of the incestuous person, whom Paul directed the Corinthians to excommunicate. "Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?" So one sinner tolerated will corrupt a whole society by his bad example. "Purge out, therefore, the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump." Excommunicate that abominable person, and suffer him not, as one of your community, to approach the Lord's table; and "*keep the feast* of the Lord's Supper, *not with the old leaven* of sensuality and uncleanness, with which ye were formerly corrupted, *neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened* (uncorrupted) qualities *of sincerity and truth.*"

As it regards the use of unleavened bread at the Lord's Supper, we have little to say, as we believe it a matter of very small consequence, what kind of bread is made use of, leavened or unleavened. The most important consideration is, that *the leaven of malice and wickedness be excluded.* We are aware, however, that some commentators are very

solicitous that all christians should use unleavened bread at the Lord's Supper; but as our Lord used the *common* bread of the *time;* and, as neither he nor his disciples have given any specific directions concerning the kind of bread and wine most proper for those occasions, we are disposed to consider this a matter of indifference. Yet, taking all things into consideration, we think the bread and wine should be of good qualities. Sour, unwholesome bread, and rough, acrid wine are certainly unfit for any feast; and when used at the Lord's table, must be very unpleasant.

In view of the second opinion, namely, that because Christ is said to be "*our passover, sacrificed for us,*" therefore, he is to be eaten in the Lord's Supper, we shall remark, that the advocates of this opinion go farther than the Jews did, for the Jews only ate the *flesh* of the lamb, but *sprinkled the blood* on the door posts of their houses.

The phrase, "Christ our passover is sacrificed (slain) for us," is obviously figurative, and spoken merely in allusion to the Jewish passover. There is no analogy between the passover and the Lord's Supper, except so far as they are both *commemorative* of great events. The passover was instituted in *remembrance* of the deliverance of the Israelites from Egyptian bondage, by which act God claimed them for his people, especially the first born. The Lord's Supper was instituted for the *remembrance* of the sacrificial death of Christ, by which both Jews and Gentiles may have redemp-

tion through faith in his blood, even the forgiveness of their sins and the salvation of their souls. Neither is there any analogy between the blood of the Paschal Lamb and that of Christ, except so far as that blood was typical of the blood of Christ. The destroying angel passed over the houses marked by the blood of the Paschal* Lamb, and thus we are taught the divine displeasure passes over the souls that believe in the blood of Christ, and submit to him as their only Saviour. The passage is obviously figurative, and used by the Apostle by way of illustration.

*The Passover was established in commemoration of the coming forth of the Israelites out of Egypt, and was called the *passover* from the Hebrew verb or root *Pasach*, which signifies to *pass*, to *skip* or *leap over*, because the night before their departure the destroying angel, who slew the first born of the Egyptians, passed by or over the houses of the Israelites that were marked with the blood of the lamb which had been killed the preceding evening; and for this reason, was called the *Paschal Lamb*.

CHAPTER IV.

AN ANSWER TO THE QUESTION, WHAT PREPARATIONS ARE NECESSARY AS IT REGARDS THE ELEMENTS FOR THE SUPPER, AND AS IT RESPECTS THE COMMUNICANTS OR GUESTS?

As it regards the elements for the Supper, we are of the opinion, that what is called "*consecrating the elements*" is unauthorised by the word of God, and consequently unnecessary and officious. Too much of this obtains in almost every christian church. The notion of making things holy, or rather of changing their nature by *consecration*, has been the parent of many superstitious and absurd ceremonies. Almost every communion service we have read is strongly tinctured with the transmuting notions of changing bread and wine into the real body and blood of Christ, or of making them to differ in their nature from what they were previously to the consecration ceremony. The youngest church in Christendom, except our own, is up to the hub in this consecrating matter. She has in her communion service a "*prayer of consecration*," to be repeated over the bread and wine designed for the Lord's Supper. And while a portion of this prayer is repeating, the officiating minister is directed "*to lay his hands upon all the bread.*" And when repeating another part, he is

"*to lay his hands upon all the vessels which contain the wine.*" And, he is directed: "*If the consecrated bread and wine be all spent before all have communicated, the Elder may consecrate more, by repeating the prayer of consecration,*" and the laying on of his hands as above directed.

The practice of consecrating the elements for the Lord's Supper first obtained in the dark ages. No such thing was known in the church during the first thousand years. It is said, in Matt. xxvi. 26, "Jesus took bread and blessed it." Dr. A. Clarke, in his note on this passage, says: "What was it that our Lord blessed? not the *bread*, though many think the contrary, being deceived by the word IT, which is improperly *supplied* in our version, but God, the dispenser of every good.—No blessing, therefore, of the elements is here intended; *they* were already blessed, in being sent as a gift of mercy from the bountiful Lord; but God the sender is blessed, because of the liberal provision he has made for his worthless creatures. *Blessing* and *touching* the *bread*, are merely *Popish ceremonies*, unauthorised either by Scripture, or the practice of the pure church of God; necessary of course to them who pretend to *transmute*, by a kind of spiritual incantation, the *bread* and *wine* into the *real body* and blood of Jesus Christ: a measure, the grossest in folly and most stupid in nonsense, to which God in judgment ever abandoned the fallen spirit of man."

We are happy to have it in our power to say,

that the Methodist Protestant Church has no consecrating ceremony in her communion service; nor does she direct her ministers to lay their hands, by way of consecration, on the bread and wine used in the Lord's Supper. The form of prayer to be repeated by our ministers in the administration of the Lord's Supper, is calculated and *designed* to prepare the mind and heart for a grateful and worthy reception, and to implore the divine mercy and benediction. It would seem that some appropriate form of sound words is proper on those occasions, to guide the mind and lead the heart into a suitably pious train of thought and expression. Our own experience and practice has fully confirmed us in the opinion, that it is always best to follow the form prescribed.

The only necessary preparation, in the elements, after giving thanks to God for the unspeakable gift of his Son for the redemption of the world, is, that, in obedience to Christ's command and example, we *break* the bread and distribute it; and then pour out the wine and hand the cup with an appropriate exhortation.

The forms of words recommended in our formulary are: *Take, eat this in remembrance that Christ's body was broken for you; for while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us, and became the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world.* On presenting the cup: *Drink ye all of this, in grateful remembrance, that the blood of Christ was shed for you;*

for ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, but with the precious blood of Christ, in whom we have redemption, through faith, even the forgiveness of our sins, and the sanctification of our souls.

The officiating ministers, however, are not expected to confine themselves exclusively to the words of the form, but after announcing the form to the first person served with the bread or wine, as the case may be, they are at liberty to add such remarks and exhortations as are suitable to the occasion. The framers of our service have, in view of this liberty, put down several passages of scripture to lead the minds of ministers into a train of profitable and appropriate reflections and remarks. These have always a good effect; they serve to assist the minds of the people in their meditations on the unbounded love of God in the gift of his Son, and their corresponding obligations to love him, and keep his commandments; and they contribute largely to the spirituality and devotion of the occasion.

Breaking the bread is a necessary and significant part of this solemn rite. It is mere trifling to say, that "breaking the cakes of unleavened bread was the most convenient mode, and, therefore, our Lord broke the bread." It is very evident that Christ designed to fix the attention of his disciples on the *act* of *breaking* the bread, for the purpose of ever after calling up to the minds of his followers his ignominious death on the cross; hence he

said, "Take, eat; this *broken bread represents* my body *which is to be broken* for you; this do in REMEMBRANCE of me." That is, imitate, *hereafter*, what you now see me perform. Take bread and *break* it in token of the violence which, in a few hours, will be inflicted on my body, the sacrificial offering for sin; and eat the bread *broken* in *remembrance* of my great sufferings and violent death on the cross. Whitby very justly remarks, that "where no body *broken* is distributed, there nothing can be eaten in *memorial* of his *broken* body. Hence it was that *distributing* bread *broken* continued for a thousand years; and was observed even in the Romish Church in the eleventh century."

We should be highly gratified to see this scriptural and primitive practice of breaking the bread obtain, in all the Protestant Methodist Churches, as uniformly as in all the Presbyterian Churches in the world. The prevailing and universal custom among Methodists, of cutting the bread into small pieces, takes away from this part of the service its main feature of expression and signification, if, indeed, it be not a careless disregard of Christ's positive command.

2. The preparation in the guests.

It is to be feared that too little attention is given by many christians to a preparation for a worthy celebration of the Lord's Supper. Some appear to be reminded of the feast only by a sight of the table; and others feel so much indifference about

it, that they can, after sermon, turn their backs upon the Lord's table, and hasten home to eat at their own tables of what to them is more acceptable, and requires less sacrifice and devotion from their ungrateful hearts. We are sorry to be compelled to say, that we have observed among Methodist ministers, both Protestant and Episcopal, a marked indifference in relation to a preparation for the celebration of this ordinance. While the ministers of other churches take particular pains, even in the preceding week, to impress on the minds of their fellowship the nature and solemn character of the approaching festival, and thus prepare their minds and hearts for a worthy reception, Methodist ministers, in too many instances, scarcely so much as advert to the occasion. This, to say the least of it, is a culpable neglect, on the part of those servants whom God hath appointed to wait on his people, and minister in holy things. Indeed, it often happens, that on the very day of the celebration, the minister scarcely condescends to notice his master's table, or invite attention to the solemn ordinance, until after he has dismissed the congregation. Then he briefly informs the society that the "sacrament" will be administered, and perhaps gives an invitation to those in good standing in their own churches to tarry and partake.

But to the question, what preparation is necessary in the communicants? The first thing necessary, we apprehend, is, that they *understand* the nature and design of the institution. Without

this, they cannot partake so profitably as those who have a clear perception of the nature of the ordinance. What confusion must hang about the minds of those who are taught, that they are to approach the table of the Lord and *feed* on his body and *drink* his blood by faith? What terror must be excited in the hearts of the timid but sincere believers, who are informed, that unless they discern the Lord's body in the Supper, according to the mystical notion of the preacher, they will partake unworthily, and eat and drink damnation?

The second thing necessary is, that the communicants examine themselves. "Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup." Let him examine himself, First, whether his motives are pure, whether his design in approaching the table, is to keep up the memory of Christ's death and resurrection. Secondly, whether he is moved to do this by a sense of gratitude to God for the great love wherewith he loved the world. And, Thirdly, whether he comes with a firm purpose of doing honor to Christ by living in all respects conformably to his precepts and example. There can, however, be no better moral preparation for a reception of the Lord's Supper, than a habit of piety; an every day contemplation of the immense obligations we are laid under by divine goodness, and a habitual dedication of soul and body to the service of God. Yet as we are prone to forgetfulness, lukewarmness, ingratitude and formality, it becomes necessary on those extra

occasions, to institute a particular examination into our motives, desires, tempers and purposes; and to rouse up our souls by a special contemplation of the great love wherewith Christ loved us and shed his blood for us, that our faith and love may be increased; and "that we may worthily and profitably commemorate the death and passion of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

O! the rich depths of love divine,
Of bliss, a boundless store!
Dear Saviour, let me call thee mine;
I cannot wish for more.

On thee alone my hope relies,
Beneath thy cross I fall;
My Lord, my life, my sacrifice,
My Saviour, and my all.

CHAPTER V.

AN ANSWER TO THE QUESTION, WHO MAY PARTAKE OF THE LORD'S SUPPER.

To answer this question fairly, we must view the Lord's Supper as a means of grace. Our church has, with great propriety, recognized this ordinance as a means of grace. There can be no question that our Lord designed it to be such to all his followers, as well as a commemorative feast. All the Jewish commemorative feasts were accompanied with acts of devotion, such as prayer, thanksgiving, reading of the law and the prophets, offerings, &c. And our Lord certainly intended that his feast, held in commemoration of the most important event that ever took place since the creation of man, and productive of the most stupendous benefits to his creatures, should be accompanied by the liveliest expressions of gratitude and devotion. That in the right apprehension of the inestimable gift of the Son of God, and the great love wherewith Christ loved us and gave himself for us, every soul should be penetrated, humbled, exalted, and blessed with the visitations of divine mercy and favour; and be induced, from a contemplation of the unbounded goodness and mercy of God in Christ Jesus, to make an entire dedication of soul and body to his service.

When we contemplate the Supper, however, as a means of grace, we do not allow it to have any grace in and of itself which is communicated to those who partake, for this opinion would necessarily carry us away into the absurdities of transubstantiation or consubstantiation; but we hold, that it is a means whereby every gracious principle may be increased and strengthened in the hearts of those who use it understandingly and rightly.—For example: one man approaches the Lord's table without understanding the nature and design of the ordinance, without gratitude, without self-examination, without prayer, without faith in the word and promises of God, without a firm purpose of devoting himself to the service of God; he takes the bread, he drinks the wine, and retires to his seat in the church with a hard, insensible heart. To this man the Lord's Supper has been no means of grace. His heart has not been penetrated and softened—his affections have not been lifted up toward heaven, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God—his will has not been subdued, but he remains the same ungrateful and stupid formalist he was before he approached the Lord's table.

Another man draws nigh to his Master's table. He has informed his mind on the true meaning of the service. He has examined himself on motives, intentions, and future purposes. He comes with prayer, beseeching God to enable him to use this means of grace properly and worthily. He approaches in faith, believing the record of the Son

of God. He contemplates him in the garden of Gethsemane, and beholds him prostrate on the ground, and sees him agonize till his sweat become as great drops of blood. He follows him to Pilate's hall, and witnesses the scourgers make long furrows in his sacred back. He sees him labouring up the steep ascent of Calvary, bearing his cross, while the infuriated rabble cry behind him: away with him, away with him; crucify him! He beholds him extended on the cross, and hears the nails driven through his hands and his feet, and beholds him hang between the heavens and the earth, the victim for sin, "the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world." He believes the sacrifice was made for *him and for all;* his heart is penetrated with love and gratitude; his soul is overwhelmed with a sense of the unbounded goodness and mercy of God in the gift of his Son; and while he meditates, as it were, beneath the cross, and "hears his Saviour's dying groans, and sees his gushing blood" he cries: for me, for me the Saviour dies! This man partakes of the memorials of the broken body and shed blood of Christ with emotions of unspeakable gratitude, and retires to his seat in the church with his heart melted into tenderness and his soul refreshed; for he has, while commemorating the dying love of Jesus, had sweet intercourse and "fellowship with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ." To this man the Lord's Supper has indeed been a means of grace; for in the proper un-

derstanding and right use of it, it has been to him a means of increasing his gratitude to God, his love to Christ, his love to the brethren, and of winding up his affections to things heavenly and divine.

Viewing the Lord's Supper as a means of grace, we are prepared to say, that every one who sincerely desires to flee the wrath to come, and save his soul alive, to look unto Jesus Christ for salvation, and to acknowledge his death as a sacrificial offering, and eat the Supper in remembrance of God's love to him in sending his Son into the world, may partake, yea, has a right to partake of this feast. This of course will include every sincere seeker of religion, the broken-hearted penitent, as well as the man who loves the Lord Jesus Christ, and walks in all the commandments of God blameless.

Some persons think themselves too unworthy to partake of so holy an ordinance, and others think if they do partake they will not in future be able to live so blameless a life as the gospel requires; and, therefore, they will bring upon themselves the condemnation of eating and drinking unworthily; hence, many serious and well meaning persons are deterred from approaching the Lord's table. Both of these notions are founded on false views of the nature and design of the Supper. The first suppose the ordinance to be composed of something more than bread and wine. That there is some *mysterious and invisible presence* which makes it too holy to be eaten by such poor unworthy sinful

creatures as they are; or that some particular and extraordinary act of faith is necessary to a right reception, of which they are incompetent. The second view the Lord's Supper in the light of a sacramental oath, or as swearing allegiance to heaven's King, that they will henceforth forever perfectly obey all his commandments; and, therefore, they are afraid of involving themselves in spiritual perjury. To the first we would say: viewing this ordinance as a means of grace, and a commemorative feast, you have nothing to fear. Here is no transubstantiation, no consubstantiation, no mysterious eating and drinking the body and blood of Christ. These elements are bread and wine, and you are invited, yea, commanded to take these in *remembrance* of Christ's death and resurrection.—If you feel unworthy, we say to you: O yes, you are unworthy of every good thing you enjoy; of the food you eat; of the raiment you put on; of the houses you inhabit; of your civil privileges; of all your religious means, and of heaven's best gift, the Son of God, who tasted death for you, and for the world; *but let not your unworthiness hinder you from obeying God;* let it not keep you from the table of the Lord, who loved you and gave himself for you; and commanded you to do this in remembrance of him. Your attention to this service, while it excites your gratitude, will increase your love, and renew your spiritual strength; and by the assisting grace of God, you will be enabled to keep all his commandments.

In view of the second difficulty we would remark, that it is probable many persons have imbibed very erroneous notions of the nature and design of the Lord's Supper from the frequent use of the term "SACRAMENT." This term is not found in the New Testament. The word *sacramentum*, from which it is derived, properly signifies a military oath, taken by the Roman soldiers to obey their commander. It is of pagan origin, and conveys an idea totally foreign to our Lord's design when he instituted the Supper. It would have been well if the term had never been applied to the Lord's Supper, for it is neither scriptural nor appropriate.*

* We are indebted to the Papists for the use of the term SACRAMENT. In their rites, ceremonies, and translations, the term is of very frequent recurrence. They have, "the sacrament of baptism," "the sacrament of confirmation," "the sacrament of the mass," "the sacrament of penance," "the sacrament of orders," "the sacrament of matrimony," "the sacrament of extreme unction," "the sacrament of God's will," "the sacrament of piety," "the sacrament of a dream," "the sacrament of the seven stars," "the sacrament of the woman," &c. &c. They use the term as expressive of an oath, and also of a mystery, although it cannot, with any degree of propriety, be put for mystery. Some ecclesiastical writers of the third century, however, rendered the word *musterion* by *sacramentum*, and this gave rise to the definition of a sacrament, as *the visible sign of an inward grace.* Now when this definition is applied to the Lord's Supper, it unavoidably leads to transubstantiation, or supposes some virtue or grace in the consecrated bread and wine, which is received by eating the one, and drinking the other.

We do not here mean to say, that he who partakes of the Lord's Supper is under no obligation to keep the commandments of God. Very far from it. Every individual is under obligation to love the Lord Jesus Christ, and to obey the gospel of God our Saviour so long as he lives. But we mean to say, that the act of partaking of the Lord's Supper is not swearing allegiance, or performing a ceremony tantamount to an oath of allegiance.—It is the commemoration of the dying love of Jesus. It is a public declaration of our belief of that fact, and of our reliance on his merits alone for salvation. It is a means by which we expect all the finer feelings of our souls to be brought into lively exercise, and by the use of which we may, through faith and prayer, draw nigh to God, and thus be more fully assimilated into the divine likeness.—We need, therefore, have no fear of *oaths*, or *spiritual perjury*. The Lord, at the institution of his Supper, exacted no oaths of his disciples. His command was, and is, "Do this in remembrance of me." And his servant Paul said: "As often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come." We have, therefore, no more reason to dread this means of grace than we have to dread any other. We might, with equal propriety, fear to enter our closets and pray in private—to hear the word of God preached—or to use any other means of grace.

CHAPTER VI.

AN ANSWER TO THE QUESTION, WHAT ATTITUDE ARE CHRISTIANS TO TAKE AT THE LORD'S TABLE.

Some have said they should stand upon their feet; others, that they should be seated; and others again, that they should kneel. As our Lord gave no directions in relation to the posture to be taken at his table, we are to seek for the attitude in example and not in precept. We will, therefore, endeavor to find out the attitude taken by our Lord and his disciples when he instituted the Supper. It will be recollected that they had just finished eating the passover, and in all probability had not changed their position at table. Let us try to ascertain the attitude taken by the Jews when in the act of eating the passover. The directions given by Jehovah at the institution of this feast, are: "And thus shall ye eat it, your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste; it is the Lord's passover."—Exod. xii. 11. At first sight it would seem that the Israelites stood on their feet when they ate the passover, as they were equipt like travellers, and ate in haste; but there is nothing in the text to warrant this conclusion.—And as they were not to go outside of their doors till morning, the probability is, that they ate the

passover seated at table, as they did their ordinary meals; for this was the custom before and long after that period. A passage or two will prove that this was the Jewish custom in olden times: "And they took Joseph and cast him into a pit—and they *sat down* to eat bread."—Gen. xxxvii. 25. "And the people *sat down* to eat and to drink, and rose up to play."—Exod. xxxii. 6. "So David hid himself in the field; and when the new moon was come, the king *sat down* to eat meat.—And the king *sat* upon his seat, as at other times, even upon a seat by the wall, and Jonathan arose, and Abner *sat* by Saul's side, and David's place was empty."—1 Sam. xx. 24. In each of these passages, the Hebrew word employed is *yashab*, *to sit*, which was the universal custom of the Israelites, up to the Babylonish captivity.

But was this the attitude of our Lord and his disciples when he instituted the Supper? We believe it was not; and that they reclined at table according to the prevailing custom of the Jews of that time. There is a circumstance related by John which casts much light on our inquiry.—While Jesus and his disciples were eating the passover, he said: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me. Then the disciples looked one upon another, doubting of whom he spake. Now there was *leaning* on Jesus' bosom one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved. Simon Peter, therefore, beckoned to him, that he should ask who it should be of whom he spake.

He then, *reclining* on Jesus' breast, saith unto him, Lord, who is it?"—Jno. xiii. 21–25. This passage proves, most conclusively, that Jesus and his disciples ate the passover in the reclining attitude. They doubtless conformed, in this particular, to the custom of the people and country in which they lived. Long before the appearance of Christ among the Jews, they had fully abandoned the ancient custom of their fathers of sitting when they ate, and had adopted the fashion of the eastern nations, which was to recline at table. It is probable the Jews learnt this practice from the Assyrians in Babylon, during their seventy years' captivity. Some, however, think they learnt it from the Greeks or Romans. Be this as it may, it is certain that reclining at table was the universal custom of the Jews in our Lord's day. And we need not be astonished at this great change of attitude among a people so tenacious of the legal customs of their fathers; for the law no where prohibited reclining at meat, nor did it enjoin sitting, so that sitting and reclining were matters of indifference; and, of course, were regulated by taste and example. Here a consideration may be offered in justification of our Lord's eating the passover in a reclining posture, which is, that in consequence of so great an annual influx of Jews, to Jerusalem, from all parts of Palestine and elsewhere, for the purpose of keeping the feast, many rooms, suitably furnished, were kept by their owners to hire for the occasion. It would

seem that the apartment wherein our Lord and his disciples ate the passover was of this description, and had been engaged for that purpose. Peter and John were directed to go into the city to a certain house, and "say to the good man of the house, the master saith unto thee, where is the *guest-chamber*, where I shall eat the passover with my disciples, and he will show you a large upper room *furnished*, there make ready."–Luke xxii. 10. Mark says, "*furnished and prepared.*" Doubtless the furniture of this room consisted of a table, and couches for reclining at meat. In this room, thus "prepared," Jesus and his disciples reclined and ate the passover according to the custom of the country, making use of the ordinary furniture with which the room was provided.

It is, however, objected that three of the Evangelists say, Jesus *sat down* with his disciples to eat the passover. "Now when the even was come, he *sat down* with the twelve."—Matt. xxvi. 20. "And as they *sat* and did eat, Jesus said, Verily I say unto you; one of you that eateth with me shall betray me."—Mark xiv. 18. "And when the hour was come, he *sat down*, and the twelve apostles with him."—Luke xxii. 14. In reply to this objection it is only necessary to inform our readers that in the first and second passages cited, the original reads, "he *reclined*," *(anekieto.)* And in the third one, "*he laid down*," *(anepese.)* In addition to this we will remark, that in all the passages which give an account of the miraculous feed-

ing of the multitudes in the desert, with a few loaves and fishes, the words rendered by our translators to *sit down*, read in the original to *lie down, or recline.* Take Jno. vi. 10, as an example: "And Jesus said, make the men *sit down, (anapesein, to lie down.)* Now there was much grass in the place, so the men *sat down, (anapeson, laid down,)* in number about five thousand." It is proper here to say, that our translators are not chargeable with ignorance of the true import of the words they were translating; they purposely accommodated the passages to the custom of the western nations, who do not recline as the eastern people, but sit at meals. In all cases where sitting was the attitude, we have a very different word. "And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain, and when he was *set, (kathesantos,)* his disciples came unto him," &c.—Matt. v. 1. "They drew [the net] to shore, and *sat down, (kathesantes,)* and gathered the good [fish] into vessels, but cast the bad away."—Matt. xiii. 48.

The Jews, as we have remarked, in our Saviour's day, uniformly reclined at table, in imitation of the eastern nations. The guests lay on their left sides at full length, on elevated couches, placed around the table, with their feet outward, towards the sides of the room, supporting themselves in a reclining posture on their left arms, and feeding themselves with their right hands. This was the position of the guests at the Pharisee's table where Jesus dined, and the penitent woman "*stood at his*

feet behind him," and washed them with her tears. All that is necessary to make that interesting relation fully intelligible to us all, is to give the original term its legitimate meaning, which is, *reclined* instead of *sat*. "One of the Pharisees desired Jesus that he would eat with him, and he went into the Pharisee's house and sat down *(aneklithe, reclined,)* to meat. And, behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat *(reclined)* at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment, and *stood at his feet behind him* weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment"—Luke vii. 36–38.

From the proofs adduced, it appears very conclusive, that our Lord and his disciples ate the passover in the reclining attitude so common at that period among the Jews; and it is highly probable the position was not changed when he instituted the Supper, immediately after having eaten the passover. The question now is, are the followers of Christ at this period and part of the world, when they partake, to imitate the posture of our Lord and his disciples at the institution of the Supper? In reply to this question we say, it is very certain that our Lord gave no command concerning the posture we are to assume when we partake of the Supper, nor did he enjoin it on us to imitate him in reclining at the table; neither has any of the New Testament writers given us directions concerning the

attitude most proper to be taken by communicants; nor are we authorized to say the custom of any country, or sect of christians is law in this case. We are, therefore, of the opinion, that every church, and each individual is left at perfect liberty, on those occasions, to sit, stand, or kneel, or even to recline, although this latter attitude would seem to those who are in the practice of kneeling or sitting, to be a very indolent and unbecoming posture. Our mode is to kneel; this, however, may have had its origin in the idolatrous practice of worshipping the elements, or the wafer, but when we kneel, it is not to worship the bread and wine, or any imaginary divinity or humanity in them, but for the purpose of making prayer to Almighty God, and of imploring his assisting grace to enable us to use this means worthily and profitably. And we think kneeling the most becoming attitude for us unworthy and dependent creatures to take in our approaches to the high and holy one, the Lord of heaven and earth, the benefactor and Saviour of men.

We have been asked why our ministers are directed to partake of the Lord's Supper before they serve the people. We know of no other good reason than that of its being most convenient. It is right that the ministers should partake at some period of the service, and it would seem that they cannot partake with the same degree of composure when serving some fifty or a hundred persons, as when solely engaged with their brethren in the

ministry in this solemn act of commemoration.—There is certainly very little time consumed in their partaking first. But in this solemn service there should be no hurry. Sufficient time should be allowed to all for meditation and prayer. We have often been pained on witnessing the hurried and common-place manner of celebrating the Lord's Supper, either on account of the previous services having been too much protracted, or some subsequent service pressing on the time. If the exercises of one part of the day are too numerous, let another part be selected. We have been in the practice, in the cities, of celebrating the Lord's Supper once a month, in the forenoon of the first Sabbath, immediately after sermon; but if more time be needed, why not have this service in the afternoon; or, which would be more appropriate and more in accordance with scripture usage, in the evening?

THE END.

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